

*It has been three weeks since our last visit to the cave. I want to update everyone as to my condition, my plans for the cave, and the events of the past few weeks. I apologize for not returning your phone calls. I have been getting all of your messages, I just haven't felt up to calling back. Steve and Marc, thanks for your words of encouragement on my answering machine. I know you two are sincerely concerned for me. You are awesome friends. Marc, I know you stopped by the house a few times, and I'm sorry I never answered the door. It really helped me just knowing you dropped by. Sis, I can hear the worry in your voice. I'm o.k. Don't worry about me. Just take care of those nieces and nephews of mine.*

I figure if I can get this site updated I can let everyone know at once about how I am doing. A lot has happened in the last three weeks, so I'll do my best to cover everything. I guess I should start where the last entry left off. It took several days to get the last journal entry written down. I was so shook up from the experience that I could do little else but sit around and ponder what had happened. Right now I am on long term medical leave from work. I tried to go to work several days after the event, but my boss sent me home. I couldn't concentrate and I looked terrible. I've even been to the doctor, but I couldn't tell him about the experience, so I just told him I was under a lot of stress. He recommended rest and gave me a prescription to help me relax. Mmmmm! Good drugs!

When we left the cave I was nearly in a state of shock. I could not think clearly and was having a difficult time trying to understand what had happened. I didn't eat much nor did I get any sleep. I was glad I had the presence of mind to write down my experience while it was fresh in my mind. As I re-read what I wrote I feel like I accurately portrayed what happened in the cave that day. I wouldn't change anything I wrote. Even though it took three days to write it, when I finished writing in my journal I felt much better. I guess it was kind of therapeutic. Unfortunately it didn't last. In fact, it was after then that things got really bad.

B and I parted company after the trip and I didn't see him again

until yesterday. I didn't try to reach him, and he didn't try to get a hold of me. Nor did either of us try to contact Joe. B just dropped me off after the trip and I spent the next several days by myself in my house. I tried to eat but had no appetite. I was restless, but I couldn't find anything to do to take my mind off the experience. That's when I determined that I should write it down. As I mentioned, that helped me think a little clearer, and I seemed to be a little calmer, but it didn't last. I went to work the next day but was sent home. The day after that I had an overwhelming feeling of anxiety sink into my soul. I was depressed and confused and had no one I wanted to turn to for comfort. I was getting all kinds of phone calls from people but I just let the answering machine take the calls. I even changed the message on the machine to let everyone know I was alright. I continued in this miserable state, eating and sleeping whenever I could manage, until a week after the trip. Then things started to get strange.

At first I was hearing sounds in the house that had no explanation. Footsteps. Shuffling noises. Creaking doors. You know, the typical horror movie fare. Only the sounds were not distinct. It was as though I wasn't sure I heard what I thought I heard. I would be eating or getting out of the shower, and stop, thinking I heard something. But the sound would not repeat itself. In fact, if it weren't for the fact that it happened frequently, I couldn't be sure there were noises in the first place. Either way, I was scared. It was as though I had been caught in a spider web for the last week. Feelings of anxiety, foreboding, tension filled my life. Then came the hallucinations.

I began seeing things in a manner similar to the sounds I was hearing. Just a glimpse of something in the corner of my eye. When I would turn to look, nothing. I had been sleeping with the lights on in my room, but now I kept all the lights in the house on from before dusk to after dawn. When I started to see things on a regular basis I purchased a gun. Got it from an ad in the paper so I didn't have to wait for a permit. I went to the doctor but didn't mention the details of my life. Just told him I couldn't relax, and I walked out of there with a prescription. Fortunately my wounds and injuries were pretty much healed by this time. My back still

hurt a little, but the prescription took care of that, too. When I was on the medication I felt great, but I didn't want to walk around high the rest of my life, so I would only take it at the end of a tough day. Unfortunately the severity of the sightings increased, giving rise to a need for the medication.

The flashes in the corner of my eye continued, but then I began to see shapes and shadows. They would be outside my windows, usually at night. I still couldn't make out anything solid, so it was hard to pin down what was I was seeing. Soon I began to close all of my drapes and blinds so I could remove the possibilities of seeing something. Doing so did help in that respect, but my life was still a mess. My daily routine was mechanical and empty. I would sleep in as long as I could, usually out of exhaustion. Then I would get cleaned up and try to eat something. I lost a lot of weight, so I tried to get as much as possible down me. Then I would exercise a little and nap a lot. I'd only been out of the house a few times in the last two weeks. The store, the doctor, the gun purchase. I didn't watch much t.v. because I couldn't concentrate. I spent a lot of time on the internet. I was doing research on caves and cave myths. The only story I could find was the caver folklore about the Hodag. The Hodag is supposedly a creature that roams caves.

Two weeks after we went in the cave, and a week after I began hearing things, I began to have nightmares. Extremely lucid nightmares. No specific theme or recurring events. Just plain terrifying. Sometimes I was in my house and someone was trying to get me. Only I couldn't run because I had no legs. Other times I was in a vat and someone was pouring a syrup-like liquid on me, filling the vat. I would wake up in a panic. I would stay awake until exhaustion forced me to enter dreamland once again. A brutal routine. It continued for several days, until it reached a climax on the sixth day (yesterday). My dreams seemed so real I had a hard time telling if I was awake or not. I was beat, really drained of energy and spirit. I was going from the living room to my bedroom in the early evening when I looked down the hall and saw a dark figure toward the end. I thought it was a thief and began to back up slowly. It didn't move. As I was backing up the lights flickered

off and on. Every muscle was tense. I stopped to stare at the figure. Just then the phone rang! It startled me so bad I stumble over the chair. When I got up I wheeled around to look down the hall and nothing was there! I grabbed my keys and left the house. I felt compelled to get in the car and drive. My pulse pounded in my temples as I got in and started the car. I wanted to drive to Overlook point to see the city lights. I didn't know why I needed to go there, but I knew I HAD to go. The closer I got, the more urgent the feeling. When I arrived at the point, I saw something that at first startled me, but then caused me to be more relaxed than I had been in a long time. Joe was there! He was out of his car, standing looking at the lights. We looked at each other. I could see from the tired look on his face he had been going through the same miserable trial that I had been experiencing. He could tell from the look on my face that we had shared some terrible experience. Our conversation was unbelievably brief. "You been back?", he began, even though he knew the answer. "Yes." "We need to return." "Tomorrow good?" I asked. "Yeah, noon." He got in his car and I got into mine. I hadn't even wanted to talk to him about his experience. Obviously he didn't want to know mine. I drove over to B's house.

When he answered the door I thought that B actually looked like he was doing fine, somewhat happy. One look at me and his disposition changed. Our conversation was also succinct. "I ran into Joe, and we're going back in tomorrow at noon." B looked dead serious. He just nodded his head. I asked him if I could spend the night at his house. He eagerly let me in. I didn't notice until later, but every light in the house was turned on. He led me to his spare room. "Help yourself." "Thanks." I washed up in the bathroom, took some medication, and got the first decent sleep in a long time. I awoke early this morning and came home to get ready for the trip. I thought I would send out this update so no one will wonder what's going on with me. I suspect that by the time most of you read this I will be back home and will have a great story to tell. I promise that if you haven't heard from me by now, you will very shortly. It is now 10 a.m. on Saturday the 19th. We will be leaving for the cave in two hours.

Preparing for this trip will be like no other trip I've been on. For the first time in my life I will carry a gun into a cave. I will also carry a knife, an extensive first aid kit, plenty of food and water, and a camera. I will take several sources of light, and a pad of paper and pencil. I will have to take all of my climbing rope, since B lost his in the cave. I will carry a good length of rope with me on the other side of Floyd's Tomb. (This is the first time in three weeks that I have heard any reference to Floyds Tomb. It sent shivers up my spine just typing it.)

There are so many things I hope to accomplish this day. So many answers I hope to find in a tiny passage hidden from view. Reflecting on the events leading up to today leaves me feeling dizzy. Was this all a bad dream? Unfortunately I am wide awake, and still, in a few short hours I might face my nightmare. The thought of having another person with me in the passage does nothing to alleviate the fear I feel. I almost chuckle as I ponder a childish notion that we will have to consider: Who will enter the Tomb first? Who will lead the way into the dark unknown? Who will decide when to turn back? Foremost among the questions in my mind is, What about the video camera that I left behind? It is supposed to be able to record in complete darkness. I left the thing running, so what might we find on the tape. Darker questions follow - What if the camera is gone? What if it is destroyed?

Although it is difficult to put an exact name on my motivation, I think "closure" fits quite nicely. I need to find out a few things about this cave. The main thing, believe it or not, is to find the end of the cave. With all of the bizarre things I have witnessed these past few weeks it would seem a bit trite to want, as a primary goal, to get to the end, but that is what I want. To be sure, I will be seeking other bits of knowledge along the way. If, however, I find the end to the main passage, and an end to the passage hidden by the rock, I will be content to never return to the passage or the cave again. Never!

It would seem to me that crawling head first through a tight passage into the darkness is an unnatural thing. Just like crawling

up the side of a cliff for recreation. Or jumping out of a perfectly good airplane and floating to the ground. We do these things to satisfy our hunger for adventure. This sub-conscious desire to conquer our own little Everest. As B is fond of saying, "Caving is the last opportunity for exploration for the person with modest means." True. Just a short drive from just about anywhere in the country is a cave waiting to be explored. Even a cave well known among the general public, can be approached by someone for the first time as an adventure, something new, something to overcome. Because it's there.

Many of you don't agree with my decisions to pursue this cave. I know this from the messages I have received. I'm afraid I don't have a choice. If I am ever to experience restful slumber, I must return. If I am ever to walk the halls of my own home in peace, I must return. If I am ever to exit the overworld and enter the subterranean world of a cave, I must now return. I no longer feel that I have a choice. I MUST return.

For my family and friends who are reading this I say, Be at peace. I will conquer this cave. Then I will return and update this web site immediately. I will include any photo's we take in the cave today, and if you stop by the house I will show you the video I will have. I expect to be home later tonight, or tomorrow at the latest.

See all of you soon, with a lot of answers! Love, Ted